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OCTOBER 7, 1947

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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## What Can We Do To Improve Race and Religious Relationships in America?

*Moderator,* GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

### *Speakers*

CHARLES P. TAFT

WALTER WHITE

### *Interrogators*

MAX LERNER

CLARE BOOTHE LUCE

(See also page 15)

### COMING

—October 14, 1947—

What Should We Do for Europe Now?

—October 21, 1947—

How Can We Keep America's Economy  
Free and Strong?

Published by THE TOWN HALL, Inc., New York 18, N.Y.





# CONTENTS



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## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 7:

### "What Can We Do To Improve Race and Religious Relationships in America?"

<i>Mr. DENNY</i> .....	3
<i>Mr. WHITE</i> .....	4
<i>Mr. TAFT</i> .....	7
<i>Mr. LERNER</i> .....	11
<i>Mrs. LUCE</i> .....	14
THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN .....	15
QUESTIONS, PLEASE! .....	17



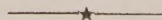
## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 14:

### "What Should We Do for Europe Now?"



## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 21:

### "How Can We Keep America's Economy Free and Strong?"



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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



OCTOBER 7, 1947

VOL. 13, No. 24

## What Can We Do To Improve Race and Religious Relationships in America?

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Well, here we are back home in Town Hall, New York, after eighteen weeks on tour. We've enjoyed our trip thoroughly, but we are glad to be back, and especially glad to see so many old friends in our audience and so many of our Town Hall trustees.

I hope you haven't had too much trouble remembering that Town Meeting has switched to Tuesday nights. In your conversations about tonight's program—I'm sure there'll be many—won't you help spread the word by reminding your friends that Town Meeting is now on Tuesday nights, 8:30 to 9:30, in each time zone across the country except Central Time, where it's 7:30 to 8:30.

Tonight's important discussion is not a debate. We're asking our speakers, Mr. Taft and Mr. White, who are leading authorities in

their respective fields, to give us their wisest counsel in answer to this question: "What can we the people do to improve race and religious relationships in America?"

We're asking our two interrogators, Mrs. Luce and Mr. Lerner, to question our speakers frankly and courageously about any phase of this subject which they feel should be brought to light.

We're not concerned here tonight with belaboring the problem caused by race and religious prejudices and the other ills that account for man's inhumanity to man. We've dealt with these in earlier Town Meetings.

Our question tonight, Mr. White and Mr. Taft, is "What can we do to improve these relationships?" What do you think that we, as individuals, can do and what can we do as members of groups.

There are at least twelve million Negroes in America, most of them



descendants of men and women who were brought here as slaves against their will. To these people, the white majority owe a deep responsibility. Are we proud of the way we've met this responsibility?

On the religious side, there are 256 different sects and religious denominations in the country, where freedom of worship is guaranteed by our Constitution, but are we using this freedom wisely? Enemies both within and without our gates are seeking daily and hourly to weaken us, to destroy our unity, and to deprive us of our freedom.

Only yesterday nine communist-dominated nations declared open ideological warfare against us. To be strong in this kind of warfare, we must be just. And justice is what we seek tonight and every night on Town Meeting.

Let's face tonight's question in the spirit of the early New England Town Meeting, and hear first from a man who has devoted the better part of his life to the advancement of his race. His autobiography is to be out soon, so that all of us may know all about him. He's a syndicated columnist for the *New York Herald Tribune*, and has an article on tonight's subject in the current issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. He is, of course, Walter White, executive secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People. Mr. White. (A pause.)

**Mr. White:**

George Denny's report that every audience poll taken by Town Meeting of the Air placed the problem of race and religion at the top of the list of subjects that would like to hear discussed is very significant. All over the world this is true. As a war correspondent in Europe and the Pacific, I was asked this question again and again: "How dare you Americans talk of freedom and democracy when in your land a man is scorned, disfranchised, segregated, denied education and jobs, tortured, even lynched, because of the color of his skin?"

We all know that something must be done about intolerance and quickly, because time is running out. What can we do? Some of you may even join lynching mobs or the Ku Klux Klan, but most people are fundamentally decent and want to fight bigotry and ignorance.

Here are some simple things you can do:

Open your eyes. Look at a man as a man, without regard to the manner in which he worships God or the color of his skin. Judge your fellow man according to the standards you wish, however high, but don't thrust him into a cage because of his race or creed. Millions of Americans minister to the jokes and the caricatures of Negro

Americans in the movies have been the iron curtain which hides the Negro from his fellow Americans.

Watch your words. Words are most powerful weapons for good or evil. Think how you would feel if you were constantly referred to as being shiftless, loud-mouthed, or grasping.

The next time you are tempted to classify all members of this minority or that one as possessing identical characteristics, usually objectionable, stop and think of members of those minorities of your own acquaintance who do not fit into this pattern. If you do not know such persons, take the trouble to know them.

It used to be fashionable to be intolerant, but, thank God, that is less true today. Great scientists, artists, educators, and churchmen are leading the battle today for human decency. Join this increasing majority and shun as you would the plague, the pattern of hatred of the Hitlers and the Bilbos.

If you are an employer, examine your own practices. Realize that the Fair Employment Practice Commission does not interfere with your right to choose freely the best man for any job. Instead, it assures your right to hire the best qualified worker, irrespective of race, creed, color, or national origin.

Give your utmost support to

other remedial legislation to stop lynching, disfranchisement, and educational inequality. Don't let yourself be tricked by that old cliché—that the solution to the problem of intolerance is the "slow process of education." Far too many Americans use this statement as an excuse for doing nothing or even actively opposing correction of evils which may destroy us all.

We need education. Some progress has been made. Differentials in the per capita expenditures for education of Negroes and whites in southern states have been reduced, but even today four times as much is spent for the education of white children as for Negro children.

Scientists are unanimous in saying that there is no difference based on race or skin color in the educability of human beings, but Negroes are not four times as intelligent as whites, and thus able to compete in the grim race of life with one quarter of the education given to their white fellow Americans. It is not Negroes alone who pay the price for such discrimination. It is America itself.

Ignore and oppose and expose the ignoramus or the bigot who would perpetuate segregated housing by means of property holders' covenants, racial hysteria, or fallacious arguments, such as that "Negroes and Jews depreciate property values," or more fre-

quently by using the red herring, "Would you want a Negro family living next door to you?"

Some Negroes do destroy property value, but so do a great many white, Gentile, Protestant, native-born American. Who would you, for example, prefer having as a neighbor, Jeeter Lester of Tobacco Road, or Marian Anderson?

Write letters to your newspapers, to the makers of movies, and to your radio stations when they are guilty of perpetuating racial or religious stereotypes, and praise them when they take a courageous stand.

Too many American newspapers continue to feature race and color of persons accused of crime. Has it ever occurred to you how your own thinking is thereby affected? Suppose every time a redheaded man was charged or suspected of robbing a bank, or committing rape, or murder, the newspapers emblazoned the story with a caption, "Redhead robs bank," or "Redheaded rapist being sought by police." If that were done long enough you and I would run every time we saw a redheaded man coming down the street.

There are many scores of church, labor, and other organizations which today vigorously oppose discrimination. Select the one of which you most approve and join it and work in it.

Now let's face the bugaboo of

social equality and intermarriage. The \$64 question that always comes up—"How would you like your daughter to marry a Negro?" I can assure you that there is no concerted campaign among Negroes to marry white people in America. But a number of states have gone to the point of forbidding intermarriage even as they proclaim that God, nature, and Gobineau oppose persons of different races and creeds associating together even in the holy bonds of matrimony.

Such laws place a premium on bastardy and illicit sexual relations. They deprive women of legal protection of their persons. Neither government nor individuals have the right to tell you with whom you must associate, nor with whom you must not associate. The person with whom you dine, or whom you invite into your home, is your own personal business and not one else's.

Let's stop running away from this question of racial and religious intolerance. Let's abandon the nameless fears which plague us. Let's stop this business of bigoted and ignorant demagogues determining our cultural and social patterns.

Finally, avoid the cliché of believing that everything is perfect in the North and imperfect in the South, so far as race and religious prejudice is concerned. Recently, in South Carolina, a com-



ageous jury handed down a decision against disfranchisement, but right here, in New York City, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has secured tax exemption of 53 million dollars a year to erect a housing project from which dark-skinned taxpayers are barred because their skins are dark.

Whether we like it or not we live in one world. It is a world which has been shrunk to microscopic size by the splitting of the atom. Two-thirds of the people of the earth have dark skins. We worship God in many different ways.

Isn't it about time that we grew up by looking beyond a man's religion or color?

If we have brains enough to believe and practice the belief that God is the Father of us all, we can hope for peace. The alternative is war and hate and death. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. White. Now, for the religious aspect of tonight's discussion, we are very happy to present a man whose voice has become familiar to Town Meeting listeners, a son of the 27th President of the United States, who has won nation-wide distinction for himself for his magnificent capacity for giving his extremely competent service to the welfare of his community, state, and Nation. Yes, he's the Honorable Charles P. Taft of Cincinnati,

president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Mr. Taft. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Taft:**

Here around the microphone, shepherded by our guide, counselor, and friend, George Denny, are four of us, rather single-minded people who are much disturbed by the kinds of prejudices and hates that we hear and see around us. We are anxious to suggest how all of you who listen can improve the situation.

That means you ought to look at the facts first. Some you know; some you've heard from Walter White. I can help more tonight by talking, not about results of discrimination and prejudice, but about how and why people act that way. Even talking a little psychological business can be exciting, perhaps, if you make it mean *you*—each one of you who is listening.

The roots of intolerance in race and religion lie in instincts and traits that people show from childhood to old age. Did you ever notice a child with two toys grab back the one he is not using if another child tries to play with it? He not only has one now but he wants to be sure that the other one is there when he might want to play with it.

Now that grab for possession seems a universal human instinct. The worker doesn't want women or Negroes or Spanish-Americans

or even perhaps Catholics or Jews to become part of the group that must grab for jobs if jobs should become scarce. That's an economic motive for racial and religious prejudice but it certainly can produce rough treatment.

Another source of this evil of prejudice and hate is the feeling against the stranger, the foreigner, and this is often found all mixed up with the economic motive, too. Much of the feeling against displaced persons—DP's—and against Russia and, in fact, feeling between classes or by the employing groups against "labor" or "the masses" stems from this.

You might think that the shrinking of the world, both in geography and the leveling out of old class lines, would reduce this basic antagonism for the foreigner or stranger. Quite the contrary. Such proximity requires more human coordination, often not needed before. The very fact of being close together produces more friction and heat than previously. Look at the way allied armies call each other names after every war.

The third source of prejudice is more complicated. Psychologists call it frustration. Watch the child that's punished by the bigger adult, his father or mother even, who then kicks the door or beats up the littler neighbor who is unlucky enough to come along at just that moment.

The "poor white" relieves his inferiority by looking down on the Negro; the German defeated in the first war by persecuting the Jews.

Now unfortunately all of us individuals suffer in some degree from such states of mind and each one of us may unconsciously contribute thus to the volume of intolerance. Even those who themselves are the objects of prejudice may, without knowing it, make their own lot more difficult.

Now that means that each one of us—which means you, too—has to examine his own attitudes and his actions with a mind sensitive to the feelings of the other human beings with whom we work and live. It's no insult to your dignity to act with restraint and with a careful thought for the way in which your actions appear to others.

The way Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson and Negro groups in every National League city planned against prejudice is a good sample. They didn't propose to let a careless act of any Negro, or white man either, break up the experiment in tolerance. That's surely one way of working with the Golden Rule. That, it seems to me, is the essence of the selflessness that Jesus enjoined upon Christians.

The next step is to know that your religion condemns this vicious thing. That goes whether you are a Catholic, Protestant, or Jew and



probably if you claim any other great religion. Religion stands for love and justice and insists upon sharing and sacrifice instead of thinking about yourself.

Religion attacks head-on this anti-foreign business. It insists that every human personality is sacred and entitled to protection and to the chance to develop. Christ's story of the good Samaritan is the final answer to every claim that any kind of person is less than human.

That kind of religion is the very basis of the declaration that all men are created equal. Lincoln's love for people is its true modern example. This is a good place to say these things because up behind us here on the stage at Town Hall is the motto of this forum: "Tolerance, Reason, Justice."

Now it's easy for me to announce all this religion and to believe it with all my own strength but it's terribly difficult to change lifetime habits, even my own, especially when they may grow from past frustration. Probably they are all mixed up with the way your own little group thinks and behaves, the bunch that each of you listeners sees at home and in the neighborhood and at work. Yet those are the very places where we have to start in our attack on intolerance.

I suggest that you start the process as a part of creating better

human teamwork for necessary community objectives.

Yes, Walter White, every child is entitled to an equal chance for a good education. Some people deny that under their breath. Don't let them get away with it. That means at least equal facilities and equal standards and pay of teachers. That means an equal minimum contribution per child.

Every human is entitled to a chance for decent housing. Certainly disease in the slums is a menace to many communities. Achieving those objectives will lessen the differences in living standards and in degrees of education and training, and that makes moral issues clearer and simpler.

Don't expect things to happen at once. We should surely recognize, nevertheless, that the progress we in the United States have made is worth being proud of. England and France and Russia and China simply don't have the problem of religious and racial prejudice in any such way as we have it. India and South Africa and Palestine do.

We have a long way to go. Our failures are obvious, but we have done the best job seen for many centuries of combating really deep-seated racial and religious prejudice. Our greatest successes and our most steady progress have come from the religious insistence upon love and justice among all human beings. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Taft. Now it's time for us to hear from our two special interrogators, Max Lerner, author and chief editorial writer for *PM*, and Clare Boothe Luce, author and former Congresswoman from Connecticut. Since you'll be hearing more from Mr. Lerner in the weeks ahead, let me tell you a little more about him. He's a graduate of Yale University, received his A.M. degree from Washington University in St. Louis, and his Ph.D. from Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government in Washington, D.C. He's been assistant editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Science*, and for two years he was editor of *The Nation*. He served on the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College, Williams College and Harvard University. Now, Max Lerner, may we have your comments and questions for the speakers? Max Lerner. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Lerner:** The Greeks had a word for it. The Greeks had a myth, the myth of the Nessus shirt, one of their mythical figures who wore a flaming shirt on his back, a shirt that he wasn't able to rip off and that he wasn't able to wear.

The problem of racism is the problem of the Nessus shirt. It clothes the sick spirit of American life, too intolerable to keep on and yet it can't be ripped off with-

out ripping off a lot of painful and festering tissue.

I think one of the most important things that we can do about this issue is, as Mr. Taft has said, to understand it, to understand how deep its roots are, to understand the nature of the beast.

I use the word beast advisedly because what we're dealing with is not simply certain elements in human nature, Mr. Taft, I'm afraid.

What we're dealing with is a specific neurosis, perhaps even a psychosis. We're dealing with a form of madness, and I say that you can't blame madness on human nature. You blame it partly upon institutions; you blame it to a very great extent upon institutions. A neurosis, remember which in Europe was capable of killing off six million Jews in cold blood, of burning them in the furnaces, of putting them into chambers that killed them — that kind of neurosis. I think it's true that we in America haven't begun to reach that extreme state of the neurosis, but I think also that we must examine our consciences and our hearts to find out why the germs of it are there.

I think it's a curious business that they're there because we're a nation of nations, we're a nation into which has flown rivers from every country and every race in the world.

I think one of the things we can do is for all these minority groups that we have spoken of to stand together, to hold hands, to link themselves indissolubly and not to let anyone play them off one against the other—Negro against Jew, Jew against Negro, Jew against Catholic, Catholic against Jew. (*Applause.*)

Another thing that we can do is to recognize that this is a question also of a majority, that the majority has the problem of insuring the economic security which is the essence of resolving the problem, because many of the frustrations flow out of economic insecurity. If we can rebuild the nature of our economic relations so that there won't be any of these frustrated people, then we can hope that there will not be as much racism as there is.

I'd like to close by putting a direct question to Mr. Taft. He has said that America ought to be proud of the progress it has made in this direction. In a way, I agree. There are many things about America that I'm terribly proud of, but I am not proud of the way it deals with its problem of the Negroes and its problem of anti-Semitism. (*Applause.*)

I want to ask Mr. Taft whether it isn't true that what we have is a caste system, and that the reason we haven't had so much bloodshed, particularly about the Negro problem is that the caste system

has been maintained without bloodshed only so long as the lower caste has been willing to accept its position as pariahs, and just as soon as they're unwilling we're going to see things happen? (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Taft:** No, Mr. Lerner, I cannot agree that we run a danger of having the minority refuse to accept the decision of the majority if there has been full discussion of the kind of problem we're facing. That's what is suggested in your question. That is to say that we're heading toward bloodshed in this problem of race and religious intolerance. I take it just as seriously as you do. I think we agree on it, but I cannot admit that the kind of spirit which exists in this country—which exists in the South, as well as in the North; exists in the North where some of our worst failures in racial and religious discrimination do exist—is such that it will produce any such result.

I said I was proud of our accomplishment. I think I am entitled to specify exactly what I mean. Neither in England, nor in France, nor in Western Europe, nor in Russia is there any such huge minority—rather I would prefer to put it "different" group; no such group with any such large proportions which is completely different and living in the midst of the group from which it is different—as we have in the United



States. I'm not detracting for a moment from some of the accomplishments that the Russians have brought about in reducing the extent of prejudices that may be seen even in Europe. But the only places that are comparable, I submit, to us, are the ones that I mention: India, South Africa, Palestine, and perhaps a few others.

Now, in those, we're numbering the ones that are killed, killed outright, murdered, by racial and religious fires of hatred, in the thousands and perhaps the hundreds of thousands, whereas the accomplishment of what I believe to be primarily a religious force operating in this country and led by just such people as Walter White, with their indomitable spirit has reduced the number of lynchings from well in the hundreds down to only seven last year, and that year had a bad record.

That's what I mean when I say we ought to be proud of the progress we've made at the same time that we insist that it is utterly inadequate and that we go forward on the same program which, up to date, we're making some progress on. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Do you have another question, Mr. Lerner?

**Mr. Lerner:** I also wanted to make my position clear just as Mr. Taft has. I was not saying that the minority in America is likely to commit bloodshed. I was say-

ing that the reason why we have had this relative peace is that the minority has accepted its pariah caste. I think that what's true in India and in Palestine—I'm very glad it is not true in America. But I submit that the price we pay for that is the fact that the minority does have this caste position. Therefore, it is up to the minority to see to it that it makes very real commitments—legislative, economic, and moral commitments—so that the minority will not suffer in the way in which it has been suffering. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. White, may we hear from you?

**Mr. White:** I want to disagree with both Mr. Taft and Mr. Lerner and vigorously. (*Laughter.*) I happen to be a member of that minority called the Negro in the United States. We have not accepted and we never will accept a pariah caste system in the United States as was attested to by the slavery votes during the war.

We haven't had the power or the strength to fight back with force of arms and I don't like force because I don't think force ever solves any problem. But we have not accepted it in our hearts or in our brains and we never will. We are going to work as long as there is breath in our body to make America live up to its protestations of democracy.

I hope that there will not be bloodshed, because I believe blood-

shed never solves anything, whether it be war, or riots, or anything else.

I deplore what is happening in Palestine and in India today. I hope we can find a peaceful solution in America. I think you in this audience tonight and the millions who listen to us over the air this evening, can bring about that peace if we will stop being hypocrites and live up to the democratic protestations which we are so fond of uttering. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Walter White. Many of us first heard of our next speaker as author of a highly successful play and movie called "The Women." Following her two other Broadway successes, Mrs. Luce turned to politics in 1940 with a book, which many of you have read, called *Europe in the Spring*. She then got into politics in earnest, and, in 1942, she began her first of two terms in Congress from the Fourth District in the State of Connecticut.

Both in and out of Congress, Mrs. Luce has given a great deal of attention to tonight's question, particularly in her fight to get the D.A.R.'s to open Constitution Hall in Washington to colored artists, a piece of news that was emblazoned across the front pages of most of our newspapers. So, Mrs. Luce, we are happy indeed to welcome you to America's Town Meeting of the Air on this occa-

sion. Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce. (*Applause.*)

**Mrs. Luce:** Well, Mr. Denny, this is not quite as single-minded an occasion—it doesn't sound so on the air—as it was when it first began, and yet I do think that on this question of religious and racial discrimination, all of the speakers are in fundamental accord. Certainly Charlie Taft and Walter White are firmly of the opinion that the question of racial discrimination is fundamentally a moral question, and it must be primarily given sound, moral answers.

Our failures to find a moral solution to the question of racial and religious intolerance, has resulted in economic and political disorders and injustices.

It seems to me at any rate that the thing to do is to get quite clearly in our heads and our own hearts that this idea of inter-racial justice is fundamentally a very simple—a very simple idea. It is a concept which is basically Christian doctrine, and it was put in the clearest, most simple fashion, in words that children could understand, 2,000 years ago in the Epistle of St. John. It said there: "Let us, therefore, love God because God hath first loved us. If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother; he is a liar. For he who loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And

this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God, loveth also his brother."

Now that's certainly laying it on the line. That's good, plain, simple Christian talk and it's as plain as Peter's staff that anybody in this audience, or anybody who listens on the air, who hates any Jew or Catholic or Negro or Asiatic or man of any other racial or religious conviction than his own, simply because he holds that conviction, is not a Christian. He's just not a Christian.

President Truman, broadcasting from Brazil some weeks ago said that this was still a Christian Nation. That remains to be seen in the next quarter of a century when we see how we solve this problem.

Now I want to ask a direct question of Mr. Walter White. In my time in Congress, one of the most disputed matters was whether legislation in behalf of the Negroes, for example, or other minority groups, was of any use unless it was overwhelmingly supported by the whole Nation. I want to ask him if he thinks that legislation can be passed which will force people to become tolerant? I mean, Walter, do you think that tolerance can be legislated, and how far can we go in controversial racial questions? (*Applause.*)

**Mr. White:** Occasionally, I indulge, among various other occupations, in that horrible thing

known as lobbying, in Washington, and in state capitals, so whether I want to or not, I would have to say yes in answer to your question, Mrs. Luce.

But also, quite seriously, I believe that campaigns for legislation are one of the most effective of all means of educating people. Mr. Taft has already referred to the campaign for federal anti-lynching legislation. Repeatedly we have been able to get the bill passed by the lower House of Congress, but the archaic laws and rules of the upper House of Congress, the Senate, which permit any Senator to speak twice for as long as he pleases on any bill and on any amendment thereto, have permitted a group of leather-lunged Senators to filibuster anti-lynching legislation to death. Repeatedly, we have been defeated in that fashion. But nevertheless the debating of the issue in the greatest forum of public debate in the world, the United States Senate, has helped educate the people to the hard, cold, bitter, cruel facts about lynching, and as a result there is a greater awareness—public awareness—of the evils of the crime, of the harm done not only to the body of the man lynched, but to the souls of the nation which permits lynching, which has resulted in a drastic decrease in this terrible crime.

So in the campaign for Fair Employment Practice Committee le-



## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**CHARLES PHELPS TAFT**—Mr. Taft is the son of William Howard Taft, 27th President of the United States, and brother of Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1897. He has the degrees of B.A. and LL.B. from Yale, and LL.D. from the University of Rochester, Marietta College, Miami University, and Ohio Wesleyan University.

Mr. Taft was admitted to the bar in 1922 and started the practice of law with Robert Taft. From 1924-37, he was a member of the firm of Taft, Stettinius and Hollister. From 1927-28 he was prosecuting attorney for Hamilton County, Ohio.

Charles Taft served as director of the U. S. Community War Services Division of the Federal Security Agency from 1941 to 1943, and was director of the Wartime Economics Affairs for the Department of State during 1944. He is currently serving as president of the Federal Council of Churches. He is the author of *City Management—The Cincinnati Experiment* and *You and I—and Roosevelt*.

**WALTER WHITE**—Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mr. White was born in Atlanta, Georgia. A graduate of Atlanta University, Mr. White also studied economics and sociology in the College of the City of New York. He also has honorary degrees from Howard and Atlanta Universities.

Mr. White attended the Pan-African Congress held in 1921 in England, France and Belgium. In 1927, he went to France for a year of writing and study as a fellow of the Guggenheim Foundation. In 1944, Mr. White served as a war correspondent in the North African, Italian, and Middle East Theatres of Operations. He traveled more than 20,000 miles visiting army camps in Great Britain, Ireland, North Africa, and Italy.

Mr. White has written widely for magazines and is the author of two novels, *Fire in the Flint* and *Flight*.

In 1931, Mr. White was made secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. He has served on the Advisory Council for the Government of the Virgin Islands, and on the Board of Visitors of the New York State Training School for Boys at Warwick, N. Y.

Mr. White has taken a prominent part in the fight against lynching.

**CLARE BOOTHE LUCE**—Mrs. Luce, playwright, novelist, and newspaperwoman, is a former Republican Congresswoman from Connecticut. Born in New York City, she attended St. Mary's School in

Garden City, Long Island, and later Miss Mason's School in Tarrytown-on-the-Hudson where she was graduated summa cum laude at the age of 15. For a year she lived in Europe where she was greatly impressed by the battlefields, hospitals, and post-war inflation. Returning to the United States she attempted to enter the school of journalism at Columbia but was too young.

In 1929, she went to work for *Vogue*. In 1931, as associate editor of *Vanity Fair*, she introduced that magazine to the subject of politics. In 1933, she became managing editor but resigned in 1934 to become a newspaper correspondent in Europe and a free lance writer.

Mrs. Luce has written several books including *Stuffed Shirts*, and *Europe in Spring*. Her plays include *The Women*, *Kiss the Boys Goodbye*, and *Margin for Error*.

Married in 1935, to Henry Robinson Luce, editor-in-chief of *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*, she became a European correspondent for *Life*. During the presidential campaign of 1940, she took her first active role in politics and became a lecturer in behalf of the Republican party. During the next two years she traveled widely with her husband in China, the Philippines, India, and the Far East.

With an interest in foreign affairs, she ran for Congress and was elected for two terms (1943-1947). During her terms, Mrs. Luce introduced and influenced the passage of several bills to promote international friendship.

**MAX LERNER**—Mr. Lerner is chief editorial writer for *PM* and assistant to its publisher. Born in Minsk, Russia, in 1902, he was brought to this country at the age of 5. He received an A.B. from Yale in 1923 and then continued to study law there for a year. In 1925 he received his A.M. from Washington University in St. Louis, and in 1927, his Ph.D. from Brookings Graduate Schools of Economics and Government, in Washington.

Mr. Lerner served as assistant editor of the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* in 1927 and later became managing editor. From 1932 to 1936, he was a member of the social science faculty at Sarah Lawrence College. From 1933 to 1935 he was also chairman of the faculty of the Wellesley Summer Institute, and in 1934, was director of the Consumers' Division of the National Emergency Council. Mr. Lerner has been a lecturer in the department of government of Harvard University and from 1938 to 1943 was professor of political science at Williams College. For two years he was editor of *The Nation*.

isolation, for the abolition of a poll tax, for federal aid to education and to health—all those things have helped to educate public opinion and to build up support for such legislation when it is enacted.

As for bills of that character, when eventually—and I hope this will prove to be true—when eventually we secure the enactment of this needed legislation—and we could get it enacted in the next session of the Congress, if it were not for that deadly coalition of reactionary southern Democrats and equally reactionary northern Republicans, Senators and Congressmen—we could pass that legislation, and then by the time we got it passed, perhaps we wouldn't need it, because you, and I, and the rest of us, would have grown adult, mature, intelligent, and democratic. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Walter White. Now while we get ready for that exciting part of our program called the Question Period, I am sure that you, our listeners, will be interested in the following message.

**Announcer:** Friends, you are listening to America's most popu-

lar radio forum, America's Town Meeting of the Air. We are discussing the question, "What Can We Do To Improve Race and Religious Relationships in America." This is one night you won't want to miss the printed copy of the entire broadcast, including the questions and answers to follow.

You may secure the Town Meeting Bulletin by sending 10 cents to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, to cover cost of printing and mailing. You may secure 12 issues for \$1.00, or 26 issues for \$2.35.

You may be interested to know that the United States Navy is using thousands of these Bulletins each week for the men in that branch of the Armed Forces.

At the close of tonight's program, you will probably want to continue the discussion of this exciting and very important question. Why not make it a habit to have your own Town Meeting discussion group in your own home, club, school, or church every Tuesday night? Remember, Tuesday night is Town Meeting night.

Now, for the question period here is Mr. Denny.

# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* We are very anxious to get the best possible questions, here, tonight and every Tuesday night for this part of our Town Meeting program, so Town Hall and the publishers of the *Americana Encyclopedia* will present a \$210 set of the *Americana* to the person who in the opinion of our local committee of judges, asks the question considered best for bringing out facts and broadening the scope of this discussion. Now, let's start with the question from the gentleman in the fourth row.

*Man:* I should like to ask Mr. Taft: What do you suggest as a practical measure to improve the religious relationship between the Federal Council of Churches and the Protestant Fundamentalists—American Council of Christian Churches?

*Mr. Denny:* There you've got it, Mr. Taft.

*Mr. Taft:* Well, I think the answer must be based on very simple principles and that is that we should have every consideration for the strength and the validity of the opinions of others, that we should give them every opportunity to express them, and that we should certainly exhibit the kind of restraint and careful statement that we recommend for ourselves and hope that they will do the same.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The lady over here on the side.

*Lady:* I would like to ask Mr. Lerner to answer the question, and Mrs. Luce to comment. *(Laughter.)*

*Mr. Denny:* You are firing both barrels, are you?

*Lady:* Could an ecclesiastical edict with fear and threat of excommunication endanger the right of the individual as an American who enjoys the right to petition the government in civil matters?

*Mr. Denny:* Oh, oh! I think what the lady has in mind is that St. Louis case that was published in the paper—who is the man?—Bishop Ritter, who held that anyone who appealed to civil authorities—appealing against his decision to allow Negroes to go to school with the whites in the parochial schools — would be excommunicated. That was upheld according to announcement in the paper this morning by this gentleman's superior—isn't that right, Mrs. Luce?

*Mrs. Luce:* Bishop Ritter announced it.

*Mr. Lerner:* Since Mrs. Luce knows more about it, why doesn't she comment first and then I'll comment after her. *(Laughter.)*

*Mr. Denny:* All right, we'll ask Mrs. Luce to comment on the lady's question first. I guess the purport of the question is to know



whether the edict is in conflict with the civil rights of the individual. Is that the purpose of your question?

*Mrs. Luce:* As I got the story from the newspapers, Bishop Ritter informed his own communicants that they would force their children, or order their children to go to parochial schools with colored children, or risk ex-communication, if they took the matter to the courts. Now, Bishop Ritter, as I understand it, in saying that, said that he wanted Catholics to understand two things; first, that all human beings are created equal in the eyes of God; secondly, the Catholics who did not choose to act on this basic Christian doctrine would face ex-communication.

Now, it seems to me that that is a very sound statement, both of doctrine and very sound policy. I don't see where it has deprived anyone of his civil right in any respect. They were still free to go to the courts, if they chose to be ex-communicated. It's very simple. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Mr. Lerner, do you wish to comment, or shall we go on to the next question?

*Mr. Lerner:* Well, I'd just like to say this: That so far as the social issue is involved, it seems to me that this Bishop Ritter showed a good deal of social consciousness and social spirit in asking the members of his church not to discrimi-

nate against Negroes. So far as the political and legal issue is involved, I would say that once you become a member of a church in which the discipline is what it is within the Catholic church, you do make yourself amenable to that discipline, and to that extent, as Mrs. Luce says, you surrender your right of appeal to the civil authorities. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* All right. The question from the gentleman of the second row.

*Man:* My question is directed to Mr. White. Mr. White, do you think that the recent publication of a novel like Sinclair Lewis' *Kingsblood Royal* promotes better race relationships or that it aggravates the situation?

*Mr. White:* I didn't write the novel, and had I written it, I might have written it with some difference in the plot and in the emphasis. I think the fact that more than one million Americans have paid coin of the realm to buy *Kingsblood Royal* and to read it is a helpful thing because they were forced to face a very definite issue as to what would happen in a community where a rather charming but rather smug, middle-class individual suddenly discovered he has Negro blood. The reaction of the community to it—this, I think, has forced thinking on the issue, as perhaps nothing else has done. I think on the whole the benefit has been far greater than

any lack of benefit through the publication of that novel.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now in the balcony. The gentleman on the second row.

*Man:* My question is directed to Mr. Taft. Since religion and education are looked upon to better relationships in America, what solution would you offer to combat racial discrimination in our schools and universities?

*Mr. Taft:* I think the first step in the solution is to condemn segregation and racial discrimination in education or in employment on solid, moral grounds. The question as to the next step is one which is more difficult. Certainly in some of these matters the passage of laws, which sometimes can be secured before you have a solid public opinion behind it, may actually delay the process. Yet there could be no question that the campaigns for securing that kind of legislation is a very sound educational process in itself. There is also no doubt that you reach a point in the state of public opinion where the enforcement, either of an old law or the passage of a new law and its enforcement, tips the scale and brings about the result which you are after.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Mrs. Luce has a comment on this.

*Mrs. Luce:* Well, the New Jersey State Constitutional Convention, on August 20, 1947, adopted an anti-discrimination clause in the

schools and in the state militia. This is the first state to put such a provision in its state charter. It is interesting that the provision was introduced by the one and only colored delegate to the Convention.

It seems to me that if every state in the Union would introduce such a provision in its revisal of its charter, it would go a long way to doing away with racial discrimination, because prejudice begins, I think, among the young and in the schools, and that is one of the first places to begin eradicating it.

My own state, Connecticut, is one of the few states that has an Unfair-Practice Law. I'd like to put in a plug for the Nutmeg State. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. I have a gentleman over here.

*Man:* I am addressing my question to Mr. Lerner. Cannot racial and religious relationships be improved best by grassroots community action emphasizing the individual rewards of unprejudiced behavior, rather than moralizing and rebuke.

*Mr. Lerner:* I certainly agree on both those scores. First, that you have got to work in the grassroots communities; second, that you must go beyond moralizing and rebuke. But on the question of whether you should emphasize the individual rewards, I am not sure that I agree. One of the

things that troubles me about this is that we are trying to sell the idea of human decency on the notion that somehow you are going to be rewarded for being decent. I, for example, think that there is much more involved in having Negroes playing in major league baseball than the fact that a lot of people pay admission to see Jackie Robinson. I don't think that's the reason for having Jackie Robinson there. I think it ought to be definitely a matter of the commitment that you make to yourself and community, and not the rewards that you get. Thank you. (*Applause.*)

*Man:* My question is addressed to Mr. Taft. Is not active cooperation between religious and racial groups in behalf of justice itself one of the most effective means of combating prejudices?

*Mr. Taft:* I think there is no question as to that. That's exactly what they are doing to a very wide extent across this country. I think it is quite clear that in the South the activity of religious groups and of those whose efforts are based solidly on religious principles have been responsible in a considerable part for much of the progress that has been made.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Taft. Now we are going to have summaries from both Mr. Taft and Mr. White. First, a final word from Mr. Charles Taft.

*Mr. Taft:* We have wandered around our subject this evening and looked at it from a good many angles. There are some phases terribly important that we couldn't get around to, even in a whole hour.

We face a long educational process.

Compulsion by laws against discrimination is an important element to tip the balance of group habits at the right moment, but laws that are ignored are bad business. Legislation certainly doesn't solve all.

I can't quite agree with Mr. Lerner that we are dealing with psychoses, although that comes in. It's the ordinary people that we have to convert and with whom we have to work on the major question of prejudice.

Getting rid of feelings that have grown up by habit takes time and it takes activity more than talk. Get into working in community organizations to meet human needs and bring the people in in your groups. By that you will shrink intolerance and meet human needs and help bring tolerance, reason and justice.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you Mr. Taft. Now, Walter White, may we hear from you.

*Mr. White:* We are agreed that a greater consciousness of our shortcomings is growing in America, but that is not enough. If the estimated ten million people who



listen tonight go back tomorrow morning to the old ways of fearing, hating, and cutting the throats of those who differ from themselves, this evening has been wasted. The era of an Anglo-Saxon-dominated world is gone. No longer can England and America tell the rest of the world what it shall do. A rival ideology threatens to sweep the world. Japan lost the war, but she fertilized in the minds of Asia's billions the determination to enjoy freedom, too.

These two forces have produced a situation where the democracies must "put up or shut up." We say we fight and work for freedom for all men everywhere. If we prove we mean this, a democratic and free society can survive. If we don't, we are doomed.

What we do about racial and religious minorities is one of the most severe tests of our protestations of democracy. Democracy can never be destroyed from without, it can only destroy itself. Do we believe enough to give up our prejudices to save our way of life? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Walter White, Charles Taft, Clare Boothe Luce and Max Lerner, for your very valuable contribution to this discussion. And speaking of thanks, I know that you, our Town meeting listeners, appreciate these programs, so many of you told us on the tour we just com-

pleted. But I'd like to take this occasion to remind you that thanks are also due to your local station and to your local sponsor who make these programs possible in your community.

If you want more programs like Town Meeting, as you say you do, let your local sponsor and your local station manager know that you appreciate these Town Meetings.

Incidentally, two weeks ago in Dallas, you may recall that our program was on the subject "Should Women Accept the New Fashions." We invited your comments and told you that we'd let you know the results. Here they are. I'm afraid they were overwhelmingly against the "new look." (*Laughter and applause.*) Out of more than 3,000 letters received here in Town Hall, only 50 favored the "new look." The *Jamestown Post*, our local sponsor in that city, conducted a poll of its own with similar results—1,102 against and 71 for. Well, now, we have done with the "new look."

Now next week we turn again to the international scene, when we discuss the Marshall Plan and we have as our speakers the Honorable Dean G. Acheson, former Under-Secretary of State, and Henry J. Taylor, economist, author, and radio commentator who has just returned from an extensive trip to Europe. They will be our

principal speakers on the subject, "What Should We Do for Europe Now?"

Our interrogators will be Max Lerner, chief editorial writer for

PM, and Henry Hazlitt, editor and author. So plan to be with us next Tuesday and every Tuesday at the sound of the Crier's Bell. (*Applause.*)

Statement of the ownership, management, circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of Aug. 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946, of Town Meeting Bulletin, published weekly at Columbus, Ohio, for October 1, 1947. State of New York, County of New York, ss. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Wm. Steinhoff, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the Town Meeting Bulletin and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), to wit: (1) That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, and business manager are: Publisher, The Town Hall, Inc., 113-123 West 43rd Street, N.Y. 18, N.Y.; Editor, Evelyn Graham, 32 So. Fourth St., Columbus, Ohio; Business Manager, William Steinhoff, 113-123 West 43rd St., New York 18, N.Y. (2) That the owner is: The Town Hall, Inc., 113-123 West 43rd Street, New York 18, N.Y. No stockholders. (3) That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mort-

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